



NaKu – natural.renewable.compostable

The Austrian company NaKu is a family business with the aim of replacing conventional plastics with natural polymers. NaKu was founded by husband-and-wife team Ute and Johann Zimmermann, who have been involved in research and product development with natural polymers since 2007. Both of them are considered pioneers and experts in this field.

Why natural polymers?

NaKu uses natural and renewable materials to fabricate products that are similar to conventional polymers not only in their appearance but also in their processing and their properties. Modern technology allows the production of plant-based polymers from native crops such as sugar, potatoes, maize or grain. When a natural polymer is exposed to wind and weather, and especially bacteria (for several weeks or month), it starts to rot. This means that NaKu natural polymer products can be disposed of with the household waste or be composted. NaKu natural polymers have the unique feature of being both recyclable and compostable. "Due to their good degradability and high biocompatibility, polymers with a natural origin are excellently suitable for everyday products," says Johann Zimmermann, technical director of NaKu. As a result, especially there is a great potential to replace conventional plastics, especially in the beverage and packaging industry, and thus to make a valuable contribution in terms of resource and climate protection.

The NaKu product range with a benefit for the environment

The NaKu product range includes various carrier bags, fresh produce storage bags, freezer bags and bottles.

All NaKu bags are breathable and water-resistant and are made from corn starch or sugar. Their production is climate-friendly, and they also offer clear product advantages. Foods such as fruits, vegetables or bread can be kept fresh for a demonstrably longer period of time. One special feature of the bags is that they can be used over their entire life cycle: they can be used to carry produce home, store it fresh for longer, and afterwards the bag can be used as a compostable garbage bag. All NaKu bags decompose on compost within a few weeks to their natural components of water and CO₂.

NaKu also produces bottles and cans made from the biopolymer polylactic acid, PLA for short, which is obtained from plant starch and is completely recyclable. This innovative material has similar mechanical properties to conventional PET, enabling it to produce a variety of bottle shapes and sizes. Compared to petroleum-based materials, PLA bottles have a better CO₂ balance in the manufacturing process. They are also free from plasticisers such as phthalate,

bisphenol A, BHPF or antimony, and can be used to store fruit juices or smoothies. With this innovation, it is possible to offer consumers more environmentally friendly solutions. Johann Zimmermann says: "With our products, environmentally conscious behavior does not end with the packaging material".

Innovation and responsibility

Linking state-of-the-art technology with a high degree of environmental responsibility is at the core of NaKu's corporate philosophy. "Our goal is the use of natural polymers to design products that fulfil economical and ecological requirements", says Zimmermann. At the end of the product life cycle, NaKu products are the growth base for new raw materials. The combination of nature and technology is not a contradiction, but a future necessity. NaKu is also striving to keep transport routes as short as necessary and obtain raw materials from European production areas.

Find more information about NaKu via: www.naku.at

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